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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000241

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SUBJECT: VP HASHEMI SEEKS GREATER INVOLVEMENT IN BAGHDAD
SECURITY PLAN

Classified By: Ambassador Khalilzad per 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a meeting on January 20, National Security Adviser Mowafaq Rubaie and the Ambassador asked Vice President Tareq al-Hashemi to participate in the Baghdad Security Plan (BSP) by leading the mobilization committee, a committee designed to invigorate public support for the plan.

Hashemi said he had no objections to the plan in principle but asked to see it in writing. He expressed concerns that he had not been invited to participate in drafting the BSP from its inception and asked for the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) to have input in the operations scheduled for Sunni Arab areas, saying he feared the operations would target the wrong people. Hashemi and Rubaie agreed to discuss how to implement a joint monitoring system to ensure the BSP military commanders act in a nonsectarian manner and to add an additional Sunni member to the BSP crisis cell leadership.
END SUMMARY.

Hashemi Seeks Help With IIP Security

12. (C) Vice President Hashemi opened the meeting by expressing his condolences for the American NDI worker killed on January 17 while leaving the IIP headquarters in Yarmouk. Hashemi said he felt guilty and wanted to work with MNF-I to figure out how to attack back at such perpetrators. The Vice President continued, saying the Ministry of Interior refuses to provide weapons licenses for IIP guards, and he felt the GOI was weakening the IIP. The Ambassador responded that U.S. officials had finished an examination of the IIP headquarters and had suggested approximately \$86,000 worth of changes to improve the office's security. He said he asked MNF-I troops to keep an eye on the IIP headquarters. The Ambassador and the Vice President also arranged a meeting for IIP officials to share with MNF-I officials their information on al Qaeda members in Yarmouk, Ameriya, and Ghazaliya.

13. (C) National Security Adviser Rubaie joined the meeting as the Ambassador and Vice President were making the arrangements. Rubaie offered to help in obtaining weapons licenses for the IIP and to send a senior representative from his office to the meeting between IIP and MNF-I officials. Rubaie supported Hashemi's concerns, saying al Qaeda is entrenching itself in the more affluent neighborhoods of Baghdad and terrorizing the moderate Sunni Arabs. He said the middle class is consequently leaving Baghdad, eroding what used to be the backbone of the Iraqi state.

Mobilization Committee To Drum Up Support for BSP

14. (C) Rubaie explained the new BSP to Hashemi by outlining

the six functional committees that comprise it - security, political, economic, services, media, and mobilization. Rubaie assured Hashemi the plan would be nonsectarian and said the guiding principle is for all lawbreakers, Sunni or Shia, to be stopped and for the plan to continue until there is security. Rubaie asked Hashemi to lead the mobilization committee, which would drum up public support for the BSP. The mobilization committee, for example, would facilitate delegations of Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish officials visiting together the markets, mosques, and streets of Baghdad in a show of unity. Rubaie also suggested the political leaders could appear on television channels not associated with their own ethnic groups to show that politicians are setting aside their sectarian differences. Rubaie said the goal is to have Baghdad citizens join the political parties and leave the insurgents behind. Rubaie mentioned the Prime Minister was also considering Ahmed Chalabi to help with the mobilization committee, but said he was open to Hashemi's input on this point.

Hashemi Supportive, Wants More Involvement in BSP

15. (C) The Vice President responded he supports the BSP in principle but wants to see the details of the plan in writing. Hashemi said he wants to be an equal partner and shareholder in the plan and wished to be involved from the beginning. He queried Rubaie on the specific plans for each sector of Baghdad, saying he wants the IIP to verify the names of al Qaeda targets in Sunni areas because if the wrong people were attacked, the local Sunnis would hold his party responsible. Rubaie explained the military commanders for each sector would produce their own plans and assured Hashemi that if the commanders were behaving in a sectarian manner,

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the top political leadership would find out. Hashemi suggested implementing a joint monitoring system for the commanders. Rubaie agreed a monitoring system was a good idea and said the two should think about mechanisms to implement one.

16. (C) The Vice President and National Security Adviser then discussed the composition of the crisis cell, which was formed to assist the Prime Minister in making decisions about the BSP and its operations. Rubaie explained the checks and balances on the BSP command structure, saying that only the Prime Minister, for example, can authorize entrance into mosques in particularly sensitive areas. Hashemi nevertheless expressed concern that another Sunni Arab be added to the crisis cell to send a message that the cell is balanced. (Note: The crisis cell contains the PM, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Interior, the National Security Adviser, the Chief of Staff of the Army, BSP Commander General Abud, and the CG. End note.) Hashemi asked for Deputy Prime Minister Zubai to be added to the crisis cell. Rubaie agreed, but said the Minister of Defense would oppose Zubai, so the two men agreed someone else senior from Zubai's office could attend the meeting as Rubaie's aide.
KHALILZAD